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COPY

5 April 1955

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: Memorandum from the IG, "Ten Ways for Improving CIA's Personnel Management", dated 25 February 1955 (ER-6-7188)

We concur in the suggestions of Mr. Kirkpatrick to the extent noted in following item-by-item comments:

1. The point is sound, but listing it first implies defects in the Office of Personnel which no longer seem of overwhelming significance. In many respects, particularly in overseas processing, the Office of Personnel is demonstrating an outstanding sense of service. To our minds the greatest defects in personnel management are a) the cumbersomeness and inflexibility of the personnel machinery throughout the Agency, and b) the inexperience in management of great segments of our managerial personnel.

2. Since the personnel shortage is now the worst it has ever been, we cannot willingly spare senior people for jobs in Personnel, though such rotation would of course be useful; our old hands who can contribute to solving the personnel problem can probably do it best in their managerial jobs inside the Clandestine Services. We suggest as an alternative further training of key people in Personnel in such courses of OTR as Operational Support, Basic Management, Basic Supervision, and the new course in operational support being developed by OTR for senior officers of DD/S. Our people also attend the first three courses named, and will assist OTR in presenting the new course. ✓

3. OTR states that such a course would be feasible, and the recommendation warrants study. We are also interested in having our people attend the two forty-hour courses already given by OTR: Basic Management (for senior personnel), which 51 members of the Clandestine Services have already attended, and Basic Supervision (for junior personnel), taken so far by 29. These useful courses do not concern themselves with the minutiae of personnel regulations, but do handle the other subjects Mr. Kirkpatrick mentions. I am informed that student reaction to the courses is almost unanimously enthusiastic.

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4. There has been considerable progress in the orderly reassignment of returnees, but it will never be accomplished to everyone's satisfaction. One of the principal obstacles is the reluctance of the individual to commit himself to a job sight unseen -- i.e. agree to a definite next assignment before he returns. Much of the door-to-door canvassing which has been discussed so lengthily is the individual's own doing. Many have complained that nothing is done for them before they return when in fact they have done nothing to define their own interests and hopes; this problem should diminish as the returnee questionnaires, which are already proving extremely helpful, come into universal use. What is more disturbing is the suspicion with which returnees view attempts to place them, so that they undertake their own shopping, but we believe that our career management officers are becoming steadily more effective as negotiators and educators in this field. The time we hope is past when large numbers of returnees could claim that no one was taking action to solve their problems, and in any case there never were the "hundreds walking the halls" that rumor imagined. The occasional case of neglect that still arises is an individual mishandling, often contributed to by the person himself, rather than a typical product of the system. Nevertheless, orderly reassignment is still complicated by the inflexibility of slots, which prevents us from changing our staffing pattern to meet rapidly changing requirements, and by the length of time it takes to adjudicate conflicting demands for personnel among so many branches, divisions, and staffs, all understaffed so far as really first-class personnel is concerned. The lack of progress in finding a successful way of disposing of mediocrities is a further factor affecting efficient personnel planning.

5. This suggestion is not entirely clear to us. Our career management officers give endless personal attention to conducting or arranging interviews, and routine shopping of files without interviews is not now commonplace if the person involved is available in Washington. It is probably true that the services of these officers is not yet widely enough known, but they are trying valiantly to explain the help they can give, by means of talks to staff meetings and to OTR courses, etc.

6. Concur. But in our opinion the greatest need in this field is for simplification of the procedural aspects of agent contracts (accounting for finances, for example), so that all concerned may give greater attention to the operational and personnel aspects.

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7. The 48-hour rule is utopian, but we would concur in drastically restricting access to files. ✓

8. This might be helpful, but we have not sensed of late that women are receiving anything but proper recognition.

9. It is certainly true that the work of the Employee Services Division is not widely known.

10. Concur -- but we are making progress in all aspects of this problem except possibly in the elimination of the unfit or marginal.

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From our own point of view our greatest single handicap, apart from managerial inexperience which is slowly being remedied, is the rigidity of the slotting system. The Agency's principal concern with slotting in any single component is the maintenance of the overall ceiling; it cannot be with the precise, permanent job description, grade, etc., of each individual slot, as might be possible in a stable situation or in an agency whose job remains fixed from year to year. In this Agency the nature and size of the job change so rapidly that no T/O can ever be up-to-date. Operating within a fixed but out-of-date T/O we are forced into compromises which overwork manpower in one place and waste it in another and altogether do not get the job done. What we need in the Clandestine Services is flexibility within a total strength figure, so that slots can be shifted as the need changes. Making these shifts, which arise from operational necessity, should be an operational function, not an administrative. It should be within the power of this office, not DD/S, Director of Personnel, or other officer, to control the distribution of his manpower within the ceilings allotted to him. If we could shift slots immediately according to need we would not only do our operational job better: we would also improve our personnel management, in assignments, in career development, even in initial recruitment. ✓

The problem of recruitment is especially critical, and we shall probably not solve it so long as each recruitment must be tied to a specific job. The T/O is so out-of-date at any given moment that it

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is sheer accident if the man we recruit against a particular slot fills the need that is greatest. And even more an accident if that need is still great by the time he is trained and able to fill it. (Witness the sorry history of the paramilitary recruitment program of 1950-51.) On the other hand, our recruitment has long since demonstrated that what we must look for most is general adaptability to clandestine work, not specialized language or area or other background -- that can be acquired by training, but basic suitability cannot. Therefore, we should recruit generally for the Clandestine Services, not in most cases specifically job-by-job. One of the most hopeful personnel developments in CIA is the success of the Junior Officer Trainee program, which recruits in that manner according to a very high standard. The Clandestine Services have so far absorbed fifty (50) of these excellent young men, who were not recruited against specific jobs, who came to us with basic training already behind them, and who have worked out so well that we would like to have several times as many.

For specific recommendations, we should like to see:

- a) The Junior Officer Trainee program substantially enlarged, and
- b) The following changes in the recruitment program of the Clandestine Services:
  - 1) Pooling of a substantial number of vacancies throughout the Clandestine Services,
  - 2) Recruitment against these vacancies in terms of general suitability, not specific assignment,
  - 3) Completion of basic training before assignment,
  - 4) Assignment of recruits by Career Service Panel according to need.

FRANK G. WISNER  
Deputy Director (Plans)

cc: D/DCI  
DD/S  
D/Personnel

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**MEMORANDUM FOR:** Chief, Classification & Wage Division  
Chief, Employee Services Division  
Chief, Military Personnel Division  
Chief, Placement & Utilization Division  
Chief, Processing & Records Division  
Chief, Personnel Procurement Division  
Chief, Career Service Staff  
Chief, Planning & Analysis Staff  
Chief, Special Contracting, Allowances & Processing Staff  
Special Support Assistant


**SUBJECT:**

memo, 25 Feb 55 from HQ to SUI, Subject "Ten Ways for Improving CIA's Personnel Management"

1. I am attaching for your personal use a copy of subject memorandum which was discussed briefly at our Staff meeting this morning. As I told you then, I subscribe completely to the spirit and intent of this paper and I have so told the Inspector General. Our problem, therefore, is to address ourselves earnestly and conscientiously to the several points and issues that we have already accomplished and what we may reasonably expect to accomplish in the future.

2. I would like each of you to describe for items involving your operations the first aspect of the problem—that which we have done—and then your plan of action for future activities. I would also like for you to list any additional points for improvement which might be a proper subject for discussion, planning, and action.

3. Within the next thirty days I would like to make a formal reply to the HQ/S. The Executive Officer will serve as coordinator of the reply.

  
Harrison S. Farnham  
Director of Personnel